2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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773 825 son of Deng) came in the time of Duwat . . . he came into the Shilluk country to the people of the king (that is to Fashoda). And when we became many some went to Fenikang Odurojo, but some remained at Fenidwai. Thus we separated from each other. . . . That is the beginning of (the village of) Adefalo—the ostrich and crow are of our family. They are not eaten by us on account of the *dwalo* sickness." [1]

Westermann states that the common ancestor to whom members of a clan trace descent is in most cases a man, but that "some of the clans claim descendency from an animal".[2] Hofmayr states that the number of totems among the Shilluk is small, and gives the following examples: ostrich, hippopotamus, Varanus lizard, giraffe, *gu* (a fish), a gourd, *ayiado* (a bean), *cwa* (tamarind), and *tuko* (hearth-stone). This seems to imply a wide distribution of particular clans. He also cites *curro* (a fish), the crocodile, the crested crane, and the knee-joint as totems of Tonga in the extreme south.[3]

262 773 825 As to the origin of these totems, if totems they be, we were informed that the prohibition to eat the fish *curro* was directly due to Nyakang, who told his people to bring him all the fish they caught in the river. Although they brought him many fish, they kept back one, and Nyakang, who knew this, as in dreams men are aware of things happening at a distance, told his people, i.e. all the Shilluk, that this fish must always be unlawful food to them. Concerning the crocodile, we were informed that all might eat it except those possessed by Nyakang or his mother, who if they ate it would die, and for this reason many *ajuago* might not eat it. Further questions on totemic lines elicited the statement: "If they [a group] are called thus [an animal or clan name] because it is a name let them eat him; if he was an ancestor [they] would not eat him."

114 177 825 Considering the data just cited we are struck by the fact that Westermann's example is almost in the typical Dinka form of totemism (twin birth of totem animal and human progenitor of clan), while the example given by Hofmayr is from Tonga at the extreme south of the Shilluk country, where, as we discovered, mixed marriages resulting in a mingling of Dinka and Shilluk cults were by no means uncommon. We are then inclined to consider that Shilluk totemism—as far as it exists—is due to Dinka influence.[4] In any

[1] Op. cit., 178–9. [2] Op. cit., 127. [3] Op. cit., 236.

[4] Hofmayr quotes a Shilluk text in which belief in a fish, a woman, and a gourd as ancestors is ascribed to the Dinka (op. cit., p. 235), i.e. in principle it agrees with that given by Westermann as applying to the Shilluk. Since writing the above we have heard from Mr. Heasty of a *kwa* Jang with the ostrich as totem, ostrich, crow, and man having emerged from a gourd as described on p. 41. Jang is the common Nilotic word for Dinka. Mr. Heasty, who does not regard the Shilluk as truly totemic, adds, "certainly many of the *kwa* have no totem."

2:Seligman & Seligman E-5 (1909-1910) 1932
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grouped together in battle, and still eat together ceremoniously, e.g. at mourning feasts. The *kwanyireth* have their foreheads scarred in the same manner as commoners. Lines of scar marks are also made on the breast, across the shoulder blade, and two rectangular masses above the umbilicus; these are considered to have no tribal significance but are done for the sake of adornment and are said to be admired by the opposite sex.

We are indebted to Mr. Heasty for a note on Shilluk customs, which seem to indicate that the milk avoidances of the Nilotes are dependent on fear of contamination associated with the sexual act.

A young woman does not drink milk under any circumstances, though a woman who is nursing a baby may, as do old women past the reproductive age. Only small boys herd the cattle and milk them, for once a boy has reached maturity there is the danger that he may have had sexual contact, when if he milked, or handled manure, or even walked among the cattle in their pens, he would cause them to become sterile. These beliefs are held so strongly that a child who goes to his neighbours to drink milk must have a bath before he returns home, lest milk might adhere to him, be mixed with food, and be eaten by someone who was unclean. If a man has had sexual relations with his wife or another he is considered unclean and does not drink milk until the sun has set the following day. Mr. Heasty could not discover that anyone objected to drinking milk drawn by himself, nor does anyone avoid taking milk and meat together. The pottery vessels used for milk are not used for any other purpose.

A woman cooks for her husband and leaves the hut while he eats, but it is not shameful for men and women to be seen eating together, and after a man has eaten the main part of a meal a woman and her friends, usually her unmarried *nyiwa* (if her *gol* is not distant), may sit and eat while he continues his meal. A newly married couple do not eat together. Small reed mats called *paro* are used to put over pots of food to keep off flies and dust, and out of respect a woman might stand one of these upright to screen her face while eating or drinking.

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

here articles of purchase and sale are calculated in silver currency.

The daily work of the women is cooking, carrying water, cleaning the house and yard, etc. During the time of farmwork they help the men in cultivating the fields.

FOOD

The staple food is dura. It is cooked, baked into a bread (*kuga*), roasted, brewed and, when green, eaten raw. For different kinds of food vide page 102. Their diet is rather monotonous, dura being its constant chief component. The dura is pounded and ground. The mortar is either a log of wood hollowed out, or a flat excavation in the ground, lined out with clay. The mill-stones — a large and a small one, with the latter the grinding is done — are secured from districts west of the Shilluk country. — Fire is made by twirling a hard stick on a soft piece of wood.

Besides dura they eat sesame, duchn, maize, beans, some onions, various grass seeds, the seeds of the lotus plant and of some kinds of nymphaeae. The fruit of several trees, as deleib, nabag, etc. also serve as food; they even rob ant hills to procure the winter store of hoarded seeds. White ants, when in the winged state, are a delicacy to them. — Milk is used in the household in many ways: it is drunk fresh, sour, or boiled, or dura meals are prepared with it. They also make butter, by shaking or rolling the milk in a gourd. — As domestic animals are almost never slain, meat forms no part of the daily food, but is rather an exceptional delicacy, which is, however, sought for with eagerness; of game they hardly leave any piece uneaten, skin and bowels not excepted; they do not even despise dead animals. The blood of killed animals is kept and cooked, but they do not tap the blood from living cattle, as is the custom with the Bari and Masai. — Generally they prefer the meat of castrated animals.

Two chief meals are taken daily; one from nine to ten in the morning, and the second at sunset.

BREWING OF BEER

A large quantity of the dura the people reap is used in cooking merisa or beer. The grain is put into jars and water poured on it. Thus it is left till the grain begins to sprout. Then it is spread in the sun to dry, and then pounded or ground; this wet meal is mixed with flour from the fresh grain and put a second time into jars which are filled with water. After stirring and mixing well, a little dry meal is sprinkled on it; the jars are covered with small mats and allowed to remain a day or two, until it begins to ferment, when a little more water and meal are added. When the whole mass is well fermented it is filtered through a grass funnel, and the following day is ready for use. It will keep about a week. Though this drink is slightly intoxicating, it does not seem to do great harm; it is very nourishing, and the natives regard it rather as a food than a beverage.

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

233 [492] Tribal custom forbids the Shulla from riding upon a donkey, so he never possesses one. Cattle are never used for draught or carrying purposes, so he has no beasts of burden, and perhaps never will so long as women are plentiful.

231 [262] The villages are full of hunting dogs. Unlike the Nuers and most of the Dinkas the Shulla raise chickens. They are a degenerate Mediterranean strain. Eggs are eaten only by women and children.

Animal life must be well guarded and carefully housed at night most of the year. If an animal loiters on the river bank it most likely becomes the food of a crocodile. If one strays off into the woods it probably becomes the prey of a hyena, leopard or lion. Myriads of flies and numerous varieties of ticks also prey upon the flocks and herds, tormenting them by night as well as by day, and transmit the germs of various diseases also. Texas or tick fever is nearly always present, and a trypanosome not so fatal as the one of dreaded tsetse fly is also prevalent. The plague is a frequent visitor too and the mouth and foot diseases often attack the cattle toward the close of the dry season. The annual loss from all these enemies of animal life is very heavy, but as no females, unless barren, are ever killed for food or sold, and grass is plentiful, on the whole there is an increase in the number of live stock raised.

241 [797 177] As to the possibilities of agriculture in the Shulla land obstacles to be overcome have been mentioned. What the mission has done shows that many varieties of fruits and a considerable number of vegetables may be grown. Future generations may have lumber, if the right varieties of forest trees are planted. Cotton is not a sure rain crop, but with irrigation it has few enemies. Sugar-cane and rice can be grown in favorable places. The soil of this part of the Sudan is not generally deep, is deficient in nitrogen and very poor in humus. Nitrogen may be restored with legumes, but the humus problem is difficult, for the white ants devour very quickly all manure, mulch etc. spred upon the ground.

243 The Shulla in sticking to the one main crop of dura has after all adopted the grain which is naturally adapted to his methods of farming.

5. Foods and food-stuffs.

262

kwǫ́n a kind of dura-bread or mush.
àkʒ̀lǫ́ a food of dura.
àpʒ̀tǫ́ a food of dura.
àríyǫ́ a food of dura (prepared after Arab fashion).
àdʒ̀lǫ́ a food of dura (prepared after Arab fashion).
mgwáwgr a food of dura with fat, eaten without anything else.
mǫ́kʒ̀bʒ̀tí a common dura-food.

3:Westermann E-5 (1910) 1912 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

ótít a food of dura, dainty.
mʃkó ńjkí a food of dura.
àwʃɔ̀ɔ̀k cooked dura.
àbʃk green roasted dura.
ònʃt dura roasted, then soaked and mashed.
àwdɔ̀k dough.
mjńàbír a dura-food
ʃɔ̀bɔ̀ dura, soaked, and then kept till it sprouts; for making beer.
àʃɔ̀bɔ́bɔ̀ beer before it is strained.
mgyɣ beer.
mɔ́ɔ́ àtʃńjɔ̀ strained beer.
ydwɔ̀ a kind of beer.

262

6. The seasons of the year.

605
221

yéy jɔ̀rìá about September, harvest of red dura.
áwwɔ́ɔ̀k about October; end of the harvest, people are waiting for the white dura to ripen.
dgwʃrɔ̀ about November — December; harvest of white dura begins.
wɔ̀dɔ̀ December — January. Harvest of white dura continues.
lʃu hot season, January—February } no field work
ʃʃʃlń about March
ʃjńjɔ̀ about April, "mouth of rain", beginning of the rains.
shwir about May—July, time for planting red dura.
ʃʃrìá about July—September, beginning of harvest.

7. The months.

805

1. *yʃr, bʔ (wor)* about September.
2. *kʃu gàk* 3. *ńyɪl* 4. *kól* 5. *akgɔk, akgɛ dugń*
6. *akgɛ́ ʃɔ́p* 7. *ddufń* 8. *àlʃbór* 9. *àkʃl dlt*
10. *bál dugń* 11. *bál ʃɔ́p* 12. *ldl.*

8. The day-times.

wʃu è rùwɔ̀ the first morning-twilight becomes visible.
bgr morning dawn
mwʃl, mʃl morning;
fwń fa mwgl "the earth is morning"; it is morning.
dè chàń noon.
chdń yà màl the sun is in the zenith.
chwń a kʃchj the sun begins to sink, after noon.
bʃrɔ̀ afternoon;
fwń fa b. it is afternoon.
a dlkj wʃu the sun is setting.
wwń ɣyɛ́ɔ̀ the sun has set.
fwń fa wgr it is night;
kj wgr at night, midnight.

28: Oyler M-5 (ca. 1918) 1918 FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

for they occasionally pray to their ancestors in the same way, and also to the dead chief of the village. The chief is looked upon as a father. Infrequently they pray to the spirit of some departed friend. When a person has a pleasant dream about a departed friend, a prayer is frequently addressed to his spirit, as he is well disposed. The mother, brothers and sisters may also be invoked.

When prayer is to be offered to the spirit of a dead person, a female sheep is brought to the grave. If the person making the prayer is not the son of the deceased, the right ear is cut from the sheep, and tied to the ankle of the person making the offering, and the wounded ear is washed in a gourd of water, so that the blood remains in the water, and then the water is poured on the grave, and part of it is thrown in the eye of the sun (that is thrown out in front of the sun). It is for God so that it will go to him. The sheep becomes the property of the heir of the deceased. The prayer is offered before the ear is cut off. If the son offers, prayer is made to God and to the deceased, and then the sheep is killed as soon as the signs are right. The sheep is cut open, and the contents of the stomach and bowels are thrown on the house of the offerer, and then the meat is cooked. The meat can not be tasted until the oldest living wife of the deceased takes some of the soup in a small gourd, which is covered with a small native mat, and pours it on the grave. The soup that remains in the gourd is poured out in front of the house. The old men are then called to take the lead in eating the sacrifice. Women of all ages may eat of the sacrifice, but only the boys and old men of the males may eat, as no man of military age may eat of it. When the feast is finished the bones are carefully collected, and thrown into the river, as it would be bad if the bones of a devoted sheep should be gnawed by a dog.

While there is no set form for the prayer, and its length is determined by the sheep, yet they are all very similar, and the following is an example.

"We praise you, you, who are God, it was you, who gave me my father, who begot me. I pray to you also my father. Why did you go to the earth, and keep silence? Was not this your house before? When evil comes to your house, why do you not pray to God? Your house is given as a plaything to the people. You went to the presence of God, and we thought that nothing evil would befall us again, after you left. Now help,

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
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136
262
291
301

by courtesy of V. Rev. J. P. Kinnally

Shilluk with baby crocodile
(delicacy esteemed by all Shilluk, Nuer and Dinka)

[facing p. iii]
[frontispiece]

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
FJ23 Shilluk FJ23

narrow circular hole in the ground about a foot deep, and steadily pounded with a heavy, six-foot pole wielded with all the strength a young pair of arms and shoulders can bring to the task. The coarse flour which results from this operation is soaked in water and then ground again, this time between two hard, rough stones. The flour is ready for use; it is mixed with water and boiled in a shallow iron dish to make a thick porridge, and this, flavoured with a little salt if that is available, and mixed with a little milk, constitutes the meal. Young women, however, are denied the luxury of milk, unless they are nursing a baby.

By the time the women have returned from the river, ground the flour and cooked the porridge, it is already nine o'clock. If it is the dry season and there is no work to be done in the fields, the men have been sitting around since sunrise busy perhaps with some task such as making a grass rope or weaving a fish trap, or merely gossiping away the time until their food is ready. When a woman has cooked her husband's breakfast she takes it into the living hut, and then leaves while he eats. She never eats with him, though she may return later, before he has finished, and eat her own meal sitting apart; she may also join other women and eat with them. When breakfast is over the men resume their tasks, and if there is a nice part of the river bank shaded with trees, such as is to be found at Detwok, they will take their rope making and weaving materials or their fishing net and pass the day there pleasantly enough. The young boys untether the bleating sheep and goats which pour out of the village running in search of grass and water, followed by their herds who add to the din by yelling and whistling; the cattle follow at a more leisurely pace in charge of the older boys. Soon the village is empty of animals save for the mangy, half-starved dogs nosing about for scraps of food, and the scraggy chickens picking up grains of millet scattered here and there in the compound. The little girls appear, staggering under the weight of the fat babies they carry on their hips. The women and the older girls go about the never-ending household tasks, cleaning up after their untidy menfolk,

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
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pounding and grinding the flour in preparation for the evening meal. Some of them will go off to the neighbouring forest to collect firewood to sell to the mission, or they will gather some of the small eggs their undersized hens produce and take them to the Sisters to sell or exchange for a little oil or salt or cloth.

So the day passes: the village drowses under the fierce heat of midday and afternoon, but comes to life again as evening approaches. The men return from the river bringing the results of their day's labour, a few stout cow ropes, a new doormat, or a string of fish to supplement the supplies for the evening meal. The cattle stream in again and are tied up and milked by the boys, the dried cow dung is collected into heaps and set on fire and soon a cloud of thick, acrid smoke drifts low over the village. Fires begin to twinkle through the gathering dusk as preparations are made in the various compounds for the cooking of supper—boiled millet flour again with perhaps the addition of a little fish. The moon is nearly full and by the time supper is finished is sailing high in the heavens, lighting up the village with silvery brilliance. It is the invitation to the dance. A huge fire is lighted in the middle of the dancing floor, the drums are brought out and —on with the dance. Food is plentiful at present and the fishing has been good of late, so they dance because they are happy. Or perhaps food is scarce and there is no fish to be had, and supper has been meagre, or even non-existent. They dance just the same to try to forget their emptiness and misery. Any excuse will suffice, or no excuse at all. The tom-toms begin to throb, boy faces girl, and the dance begins. The booming of the drums and the yelling of the dancers, assisted by a gentleman who winds the same three notes on a kudu horn with maddening persistency, defeat all attempts at sleep in the mission half a mile away. We thump our wet pillows and call down blessings on the merrymakers. The revels continue far into the night, but at last, about midnight, even the Shilluk have had enough and, exhausted, crawl into their huts to sleep. Silence falls on the place, but it is shortly broken by the mournful howl of a prowling hyena.

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Sacrament he was receiving. He was not unmindful of my needs and sent word that food was to be prepared for me. I was taken into another house—a very special one into which few but the king and his queens enter. A woman brought me a skin to sit on and then, on her two knees, presented me with roasted maize cobs and native beer. I was in very great need of a drink for though we had waded through lots of water we could not drink it; if we did, dysentery was sure. This special house contained a very fine collection of animal skins and also the spear of Nyikang, a thing most sacred to the Shilluk. There also was a stick on which were recorded the years of the king's reign. I was sent a wing of a saddle-billed stork to use as a fan and these are, as a rule, reserved to the king himself.

At two in the afternoon I said good-bye to the king who made me a further present of a goat, and I set out for home. King Joseph, as he was now, had very thoughtfully ordered an ambach canoe to be brought so that I could cross a very deep swamp on a path that made our journey much shorter. I was feeling very tired, and every mile my feet felt like lumps of lead—the last mile seemed very long. But I arrived home about five o'clock and I announced in church the good news that the king was baptized and all the Catholics of the mission rejoiced. There were no hostile remarks from pagans that I ever heard of. King Joseph, formerly Papiti, died on September 22nd.

By King Papiti's express wish the customary temporary interment was not proceeded with, and on the night of the day following his death, he was taken to his own village of Pareth Papiti (Village of King Papiti) and there buried. The traditional funeral dances were held in his honour, but took place much earlier than usual, only about six weeks after his death.

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
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difficult and weary travel, but they are hazy as to what kind of life is led in that country and suppose it to be but a continuation of the kind of life they know on this earth. Meanwhile the spirits which have not yet started on the journey to Pa Jwok hover round their graves and former homesteads and may do harm to their living relations, and a person who has died in enmity with anyone is greatly to be feared by his late enemy. All these spirits, therefore, have to be placated by offerings and sacrifices. Someone may be taken ill, and the anxious relatives call in the witch doctor to tell them which spirit is responsible for bringing this evil upon them. He consults his oracle, such as an empty calabash to which he listens intently, and then informs the people that Nyikang says such-and-such a one, recently dead, is responsible and that sacrifice and prayer must be offered to his spirit, and perhaps intercession and sacrifice is to be made at the grave of the sick person's dead father, that his spirit may prevail upon the malignant one to remove the curse from his family. Accordingly a sheep is led to the grave of the person to be placated. The right ear is cut off and washed in water and the water poured over the grave. Prayer is made both to God, Jwok-Atang (on such private occasions as this without the intercession of Nyikang), and to the dead person. Then the sheep is killed and the meat cooked. Some of the soup is poured over the grave and the meat is then eaten by those who have taken part in the sacrifice.

All former kings, and in some cases great chiefs, have their shrines. These shrines consist of two or three huts built in the usual Shilluk fashion but with much better thatching than that affected by the ordinary Shilluk and enclosed within a reed or thorn fence. As befitting the great spirit that dwells within, these shrines are kept in good repair and spotlessly clean by the duly appointed guardians. One such shrine is situated just a few hundred yards from the mission at Detwok. It consists of two large huts surrounded by a fence and is dedicated to Nyala, a woman, surprisingly enough. She was the daughter of the seventeenth

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a Bareth of the shrine before which the sacrifice is made. 782
The king or chief who is present and who dedicates the 787
offering stands by and leads public prayer to Nyikang for 825
the blessing sought. The meat of the sacrifice is eaten by all [262]
present with special perquisites for the Bareth guardian of [793]
the shrine. Care is taken when cutting up the meat not to
break any bones. These are collected and thrown into the
Nile. The horns are stuck in the ground in front of the shrine, [237]
and the skin, scraped and cleaned, remains in the shrine as
a mat for the spirit that dwells therein.

When the new corn is cut, tithes are given to Nyikang. 243
Part of these belong to the Bareth and the remainder is 782
ground into flour and made into a thin porridge which is
poured on to the ground in front of and inside the shrine as
a libation to the residing spirit.

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advantage of the superiority that the mission education gave them over their fellows, for one became a doctor; not, alas! one of the medical variety, but a witch doctor, and the other, rejoicing in his knowledge of writing and arithmetic, tried to forge a paysheet, and now languishes in Malakal Gaol.

To the Shilluk, the foreigner and all his works were of little or no interest, unless he could see some immediate personal benefit to himself. The missionary was a person whom he hoped to touch for a piastre or a pipeful of tobacco; the mission was a place where those good, but queer, women, the Sisters ('*Thwore*'—an attempt at the Italian '*Suore*'—as he called them), could be relied upon to produce a remedy for his tummyache, a bandage for his sores and a soothing medicine for his rheumy eyes. So, too, education meant nothing to him. The mission school did not mean a place where his children could learn to read and write, but rather a convenient nursery and boarding house where offspring could be dumped during the periods when food was short in the village, and in the rainy season when parents were busy about the all-important business of planting and were only too glad to have their infants out of the way and from under their feet. They knew that in the mission the child would be well fed and housed, would even be given a yard or so of white cloth to wear and a blanket in which to roll himself at night. And when the rains were over and the grain baskets once more full, he could promptly be recalled to the family hearth, to attend to the domestic chores of minding the baby or tending the herd of goats and sheep.

The boys, too, who did condescend to attend the school, were for the most part not particularly worried about their academic advancement. They came because it was a novelty for them; it was a change from the life of the cattle camp and the village; from the milking of cows and the herding of goats and the nursing of squalling babies. They came also because of the amenities the status of a scholar offered to them; the resplendent white cloth with which to cover their

29:Dempsey M-5 (1940-1954) 1955
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dusty nakedness; the good red blankets to protect them from the cold at night; the two solid meals a day in which oil and salt were always to be found, and frequently meat and groundnuts as well, and the joys and thrills of football. For these and other blessings the Shilluk boy was quite willing to put up with the nuisance of having to sit in a classroom for a few hours each morning, with the grind of gozintas and the making of ridiculous marks on a slate. After all, he needn't learn these things if he didn't want to; when the novelty of the place wore off, and even the delights of football began to cloy, he could always run away and return to the freedom of the pampas and the cattle camp, and if he had any luck he might be able to get away with his cloth and his blanket too. And, by heaven, they did run away, with a regularity that became monotonous. I suppose that during the first couple of years, for every boy who found learning to his liking and settled down to make it his career, ten tired after a month or two and returned to the less exacting life of the kraal and the cattle camp.

Sometimes it would suddenly dawn on a Shilluk parent that he hadn't seen his son and heir about the place for the past week or two, and that his herd was either tended by a substitute, or else running wild to the detriment of his neighbours' corn fields, and with a baleful light in his eye and a willowy stick in his hand, he would make a bee-line for the mission. Or perhaps he would be returning from the river and would stand stock still and rub his eyes in astonished incredulity on beholding the vision of the apple of his eye clad in spotless white, his face shining with soap and his soul with virtue, among the alumni of Detwok Academy. Disturbed in whatever I was doing by the ear-piercing shrieks that one usually associates with pig killing, I would rush to the spot. But the result was always the same; the white badge of scholarship would be whipped off the boy and flung indignantly in my direction; the erring youth, after dodging round a few obstacles to avoid the shrewd cuts of the ashplant, would break for the open and hare it in the general direction of French Equatorial Africa, his irate dad